

Dear Medical Providers:

The Health Care Authority (HCA) contracts with CTS LanguageLink to provide interpreter services. Authorized requestors, contracted health care providers, or Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS) staff can request interpreter appointments through their online automated scheduling system. HCA interpreter services are available at no cost to health care providers when they see Medicaid eligible patients at Medicaid-covered services.

The interpreter services program supports health care providers' responsibility to establish meaningful communication with patients who cannot effectively communicate in English. For instruction on how to schedule interpreter services, please visit CTS LanguageLink website at <http://hca.ctslanguagelink.com/>. You can contact CTS LanguageLink at 1- 800-535-7358 or by email hcaproviders@ctslanguagelink.com for additional questions.

Working with an interpreter

The role of an interpreter is to help bridge the communication gap between you and your patient. They may not provide any services other than facilitating meaningful communication between the parties. Interpreters are often defined as a conduit of the provider's message and shall omit nothing from the message. They are also a clarifier, assisting in presenting the message in a culturally appropriate way while maintaining the meaning of the message.

Appointment structure

1. Pre-session - The pre-session establishes expectations for the appointment. It helps:
 - Clarify how the appointment will proceed
 - Set expectations for time and positioning
 - Establish roles and responsibilities
 - Establish any linguistic needs (special vocabulary, cultural information, etc.)
2. Appointment - During the appointment it is important to:
 - Speak to the patient not the interpreter
 - Establish roles
 - Position the participants in a way that reinforces the best method of communication
 - Speak in:
 - First Person
 - Relatively short segments or chunks of conversation
 - Plain language to ensure smooth interpretation and avoid misunderstandings
 - Remember that concepts that can be expressed in English may not have a linguistic or cultural equivalent in the patient's language
3. Post Conference - This allows you and the interpreter to:
 - Discuss additional cultural information that may help in future visits
 - Receive and give feedback on the process

Suggested practices

Due to the sensitivities of the patients you are treating, we suggest the following steps:

- For your first appointment with a new interpreter, allow for a longer than usual pre-session (up to an hour) time, so that interpreters may review any materials that will better prepare them to serve you and the clients. You are the expert so the interpreters will take direction from you. Allowing them to become familiar with the client's needs and environment will increase the interpreter's success in providing you with appropriate service.
- For new patients, the providers will need to only place the first few appointments with new interpreters at the beginning in order to establish an interpreter that will best fit the need of the client and the appointments. Once providers know who they want in the future they can work with CTS to place all the following assignments on the portal requesting that specific interpreter. CTS and the HCA interpreter services program will work to ensure interpreters are aware once they are assigned they are committed to show up to the appointment.
- CTS LanguageLink created a specific process for requesting interpreters for ABA therapy. CTS provided the following video with specific instructions on how to schedule for these services, http://www.hca.ctslanguagelink.com/provider_training_video.php.
- Remember to hold the post conference to debrief the interpreter on the appointment. This will allow you and the interpreter to discuss what went well and ensures consistency in service delivery.
- Interpreters are there to interpret for you. They are not medical providers and must not be asked to provide more than language services. While they can assist in explaining your spoken words, they must not be asked to take on additional therapeutic activities.

Additional resources

The links below to resources that may help you maximize your time using interpreter services.

<http://www.speakyourlanguages.com/training/>

<http://www.lep.gov/>

http://www.wascla.org/library/folder.389448-Working_with_Interpreters

http://hca.ctslanguagelink.com/faq_Provider.php.

http://www.ctslanguagelink.com/onsite_tips.php

http://www.ctslanguagelink.com/images/int_tips_advice_on-site.pdf